STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES 2023-24

Document Title	
STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES	
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YES ✓	YES ☐

Summary/Description:

This document defines the regulations governing attendance and engagement with courses at All Nations Christian College including those validated by The Open University.

2023-24 v1
March 23: review resulting in:
addition of page numbers,
amendment of related policies section,
amendment of typos/formatting and where College nomenclature has changed
Deletion of 9.3 and amendment to 9.1 for the sake of clarity

ALL NATIONS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

To train and equip men and women for effective participation in God's mission
to His multicultural world.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1.   CONTENTS OF POLICY

2.   LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

This policy contains rules and regulations of the College which have been prepared in line with Open University regulations and, where appropriate, the requirement of the Office for Students' Regulatory Framework and the UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

3.   INTRODUCTION

3.1. This policy is intended to support students to achieve their learning potential, recognising the enormous investment that students make, both in time, money and personal sacrifice, in choosing to pursue a programme of Higher Education. It sets out the College's expectations of student's participation and attendance in their studies and how the College will support them with their progress. As a responsible institution, the College believes it has a duty to follow-up promptly on matters of non-attendance so that students can be supported and given every opportunity to succeed.

3.2. All students are expected to engage fully with their studies. For the purposes of this policy, this means engagement in learning activities (such as lectures and tutorials), assessments and other activities which are provided to support them in their programme.

4.   SCOPE

This policy refers to all students on the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at All Nations Christian College, including non-validated programmes as well as programmes validated by The Open University.

5. PRINCIPLES

5.1. All Nations believes that learning is a shared experience and students are expected to play a part in promoting collective understanding. Students are also responsible for their participation with the teaching opportunities offered to them in their programme.

5.2. As a missionary training College, All Nations is concerned with the spiritual and personal formation of every student. In addition to personal devotions and other spiritual activities, this is achieved through the College's holistic approach to learning: 'Head (e.g., academic study through a variety of teaching methods and peer learning), Heart (e.g., personal reflection on learning and relationships) and Hands (e.g., through interactive and practical teaching sessions and team dynamics etc.)'. This is only possible through full attendance and engagement with all mandatory sessions which is why they are essential and a course requirement.

5.3. Attendance is also necessary to help to:
- enhance educational development within the area of study;
- receive information about the programme;
- prepare for all assessments;
- undertake any practical work or group work (including working with others in lectures or tutorials);
- contribute to the learning of others and to enhance the community of learners;
- prepare and develop skills for working in cross-cultural situations.

5.4. Inconsistent attendance and poor engagement:
- can put a student at risk academically and means they are less likely to benefit and progress in a meaningful way;
- does not just affect individual students, but also has an impact on others. For example, in group projects or other types of peer-learning;
- when identified early and intervention initiated, can be key to activating support or other measures to help students progress and achieve their potential.

6. ATTENDANCE MONITORING RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1. The College ensures that students are aware of their course attendance requirements through the orientation programme, the Student Agreement, the Programme Handbooks, the Student Handbooks and this policy all of which can be found here.

6.2. Tutors have a responsibility to remind students of the importance of attendance and especially the clear link between attendance and assignments and/or examinations and performance. This should be emphasised during induction and at initial meetings with personal academic tutors and should be reinforced by module and/or course tutors. Students will be informed at induction the name to whom they should report any absence from classes. This information is made available on the VLE and the Programme Handbook.

6.3. Students are responsible for engaging with the method of attendance-recording used for any mandatory learning activity to ensure their presence is recorded accurately.

6.4. Responsibility for ensuring that an accurate record of student attendance is kept, lies with Programme Leaders or their nominees. Each module tutor is responsible for recording student attendance for their own classes. Programme Administrators check lecture attendance regularly.

6.5. Tutors monitor daily attendance at compulsory activities such as lectures and tutorials and sign attendance sheets weekly. Programme Administrators check lecture attendance regularly.

6.6. Any placement supervisor is responsible for recording a student's attendance and engagement in their placement/internship. The Ministry Placement Co-ordinator is responsible for monitoring attendance on Ministry Placement, Ministry Internship, Practical Courses and CIM.

6.7. Tutors are responsible for raising concern if students who have a student visa have missed a learning contact, so that the Programme Administrators can ensure they do not jeopardise their visa status.

7. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

7.1. The College expects students to take responsibility for organising their studies and ensuring they are aware of their timetable and expectations for attendance at all activities relating to their programme of studies.

7.2. Since all our studies are intercultural, a lot of learning takes place as we engage with each other in our multicultural community both in and outside the classroom. Campus based students are therefore encouraged to become engaged as much as possible in community activities too. This sometimes involves attendance at evening and weekend events. On-line / Remote Access students are encouraged to visit college when they are able to do so for specific events or their scheduled intensive classes.

7.3. The College expects students to aim to consistently attend 100% of all timetabled sessions, and other mandatory activities relevant to their programme (see absence below). These may include: lectures, tutorials, one-to-one tutorials, online discussion groups, postgraduate supervision sessions and, for undergraduate students, other practical classes, field trips and placements (e.g., Ministry Placement, Practical Courses, CIM and Ministry Internship - see section below). It also includes attendance for the purpose of assessment such as for presentations and/or written examinations. Details of specific attendance requirements relating to these activities can be found in the relevant handbooks.

7.4. Students are responsible for engaging with the method of attendance-recording used for any mandatory learning activity (see Attendance Monitoring below).

7.5. It is the students' responsibility to check regularly for information that may include important timetabling or room changes. Changes known about in advance will be announced at the weekly 'Kick Off' Session, which all residential students are expected to attend. This information is also disseminated via email through the weekly Bulletin and through the VLE. Last minute changes will be posted on the lecture hall door and, where possible, the notice disseminated through the cohort student rep. Amendments to the timetable that impact on on-line students will be communicated directly to students through theVLE.

7.6. Students must attend and make themselves available to undertake assessments, within the dates set for them or by an extension deadline granted due to extenuating circumstances.

7.7. Attendance is more than just a physical or virtual presence in a room: it is an engagement with the session (e.g., listening to the lectures and contributions from others, participation in discussions, clarifying understanding etc.). Therefore, students should not engage with electronic devices during taught or supervised sessions other than to support their learning for that session.

7.8. Attendance is being present for the whole session: Unpunctuality causes disruption and is disrespectful to the tutor and to other learners. Students will not be marked present if they have missed more than 10 minutes of the session (e.g., by late arrival or early departure at any point in the session) without prior permission of the module tutor, unless extenuating circumstances apply. Students are generally expected to use the breaks provided to use the toilet facilities.

7.9. Pre-planned absence (see below) should only happen with the permission of the Programme Leader/Module Tutor.

8. UNDERGRADUATE ATTENDANCE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

8.1. Annual Attendance: Students must attend all three ten-week terms for each year of their studies.

8.2. Module Attendance: Students must attend all lectures and other mandatory learning activities delivered to pass the attendance requirement of a module.

8.3. Ministry Placement: Practical training is an integral part of Undergraduate courses at All Nations (Certificate, Diploma and BA). All students are required to gain experience through a weekly Ministry Placement. These are compulsory modules at Levels 4, 5 and 6. At the end of the Ministry Placement all students will be required to write a reflective report on the years' experience (full details are given in the Ministry Placement handbooks). Ministry Placement attendance is 70 hours for all students. The 100% attendance requirement applies to this module. (See Ministry Placement Handbook for full details.)

8.4. Practical Courses: Every year, as part of the compulsory Personal and Spiritual Formation module, each student is required to take some elective practical courses which are run in College. Students are required to complete a minimum of 5 hours practical course(s) each academic year. This can be made up of one, or more courses.

8.5. Ministry Internship: Ministry Internship is a level 5 core module. It covers a period of at least three weeks of practical vocational experience in a cross-cultural situation. This is a requirement for all Level 5 students. Attendance for the full period of the internship applies to this module.

8.6. Contemporary Issues in Mission (CIM): The PDP Handbook for each cohort states the minimum attendance requirement for the year. CIM sessions are not usually recorded for security reasons; students should therefore plan their attendance carefully to ensure they meet the minimum attendance requirement.

9. POSTGRADUATE ATTENDANCE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

9.1. The Postgraduate programme can beaccessed residentially, remotely and/or flexibly. However they access their studies, postgraduate students are required to attend all the sessions required for the completion of the modules relevant to their award.

9.2. Modules are delivered weekly over 10-week periods, or intensively over a period of several days via conferencing software.

9.3. See above for general attendance requirements. If attending classes in 'real time' is not possible (e.g., due to ill-health or unavoidable travel) students should view the recordings of these sessions and complete a record of studies form which will be submitted to the Postgraduate administrator and signed by the relevant module tutor.

9.4. Time zone differences may result in students needing to catch up with part of the class through recordings but the majority of classes should be attended in person. Where students are catching up using a recording, a record of studies form must be completed as above.

9.5. All Remote Access students are expected to engage fully in online discussions, and work together with peers (Campus-based and Remote Access) on activities as part of their programme. Remote Access students are encouraged to attend classes for intensive modules on campus and are welcome to attend other classes in person when convenient. (Accommodation charges will apply).

10. AUTHORISED ABSENCE

10.1. Whilst 100% attendance should be the aim of all students, the College recognises that this is not always possible if genuine extenuating circumstances occur.

10.2. Students MUST either attend or make up missed sessions to ensure they engage fully with all their learning. The majority of sessions should be attended in person.

10.3. Students should always ask for permission from their module tutor to miss a learning activity or send their apologies to them if they are unwell.

10.4. In the event of a pre-planned absence, students must request permission from and explain the reason(s) to the Programme Leader and inform the module tutor. If granted, they should make up the missed session by listening to a recording of the portion of or the whole lecture missed and complete a Record of Studies form.

10.5. In the event of sudden illness, students should send a message to the module tutor explaining their absence and make up the missed session in the usual way.

10.6. Students who are granted an authorised absence will not receive a refund of tuition fees. Nor will their expected end date of studies be amended to reflect the period of time away from their studies.

11. ACTION IN THE EVENT OF NON-ATTENDANCE

11.1. Missed sessions: Students should be advised by the module tutor how to make up a missed session. Undergraduate students are usually able to do this by listening to a recording (kept in the library) or by completing extra readings. Postgraduate lectures are also recorded and put on the cloud. In order to be eligible to pass a module given a Record of Studies form (found in the relevant programme handbook) should be completed for the missed session and be given to the programme administrator for approval by the module tutor.

11.2. Absence for more than 10 minutes of a session could result in a requirement to complete a record of studies by listening to a recording of the portion of the lecture missed.

11.3. Accessing non-class-related material (e.g., social media) during a teaching session may result in a student being marked absent for part of the session and could result in a requirement to complete a record of studies by listening to a recording of the portion or, if relevant the whole lecture missed.

11.4. Interaction with learning materials and attendance at all mandatory learning experiences is part of the learning agreement signed by every student. Therefore, non-attendance in mandatory sessions may lead to disciplinary action, if the following procedures are unsuccessful.

11.5. Meeting 1: If a student's absence from class causes concern, a meeting will be arranged with the student and their personal tutor who will consult with relevant module tutors to ascertain issues surrounding attendance.

11.6. The College expects students to make up the missed sessions by completing the Record of Studies form.

11.7. Support may be offered through action plans or other support. Discussions, action plan (if required) and outcome of the session will be formally noted. Attendance will be monitored closely with further meetings and/or tutorials booked as needed. (See the next section).

11.8. If there are extenuating circumstances, the Extenuating Circumstances Policy will be followed. The student will be reminded of this and they will also be asked to consider the financial consequences of not attending, of the possibility of repeating a module or a year if not successful and the impact this has on further study.

11.9. It will be expected that the student will improve attendance after Meeting 1.

11.10. Meeting 2 - If attendance does not improve following initial meeting (11.5) or targets on action plan have not been met, a meeting will be arranged between the Programme Leader, Personal Tutor and the student to ascertain difficulties with attendance and strategies to improve attendance. Strategies/support and an action plan will be agreed by all parties and monitored within the college tutorial process.

11.11. If attendance does not improve after the second meeting, **a verbal warning** will be issued.

11.12. Meeting 3: If attendance does not improve immediately after the verbal warning and actions are not met, the Principal/CEO (or his nominee) will meet with the student, Programme Leader and tutor to ascertain difficulties with attendance and non-compliance with action plan.

11.13. A **written warning** will be issued.

11.14. If the student does not respond to correspondence requesting a meeting, the student may be withdrawn from the programme on the third attempt of contact.

11.15. If, after receiving the final written warning, the student continues to have poor attendance, or does not meet actions on action plan, the student will be advised to suspend studies.

11.16. Students who show no inclination to engage or continue to engage with their studies will face disciplinary proceedings under the Student Disciplinary Policy which could lead to the termination of the student's registration with the College and, if appropriate, The Open University.

11.17. The student should be advised to consider the financial implications for failing learning outcomes through non-attendance.

11.18. The College will inform the Student Loans Company, or similar funding organisation of any withdrawal.

12. ACTION IN THE EVENT OF CONCERN FOR A STUDENT'S WELL-BEING

12.1. Should poor attendance be the result of challenging personal circumstances, personal and emotional support is offered first through the personal tutor. Further confidential support and advice is also available from the Personal Development Tutor.

12.2. In certain circumstances, students may be encouraged to contact their medical practitioner.

12.3. If the difficulty relates to personal issues, students are offered the option of referral to one of several experienced counsellors in the local area. The whole process is dealt with in confidence.

12.4. Where possible, reasonable adjustments will be implemented to ensure as far as possible that the student is not disadvantaged in relation to their peers. Suspension from studies via a leave of absence may be an appropriate option to discuss.

12.5. If a concern is raised about the student's ability to continue to study at the level and intensity of study required, or their condition is impacting negatively on other students and staff, as well as themselves, the College will follow the procedures contained in its Fitness to Study Policy.

13. ACTION PERTAINING TO VISA STUDENTS

13.1. Student Visa students are reminded at the start and during their programme of study that the College's continued sponsorship of their visa is dependent on them, amongst other things, meeting the attendance requirements of their programme of study.

13.2. The College has a duty to report students with Student visas to the immigration authorities and their visa sponsorship is at risk if they:
- fail to enrol within the time limit;
- miss 10 consecutive expected learning contacts without permission;
- withdraw from or defer their course.

14. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Should a student feel they have grounds to complain about the handling of their case or appeal against the decisions reached they may do so using the College Academic Appeals Policy.

15. EQUALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

15.1. All students and staff at the College will be dealt with impartially in accordance with the College 'Equality and Diversity Policy'.

15.2. All student attendance records, past and present, are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR and the College's Data Protection Policy. For details of how we process student data please see the College website www.allnations.ac.uk and insert 'Privacy at All Nations' in the search engine. This includes information about data subject rights and how a student may exercise them.

16. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, POLICY APPROVAL AND REVIEW

16.1. **The Board of Trustees** have legal oversight and responsibility for all College policies, but have delegated to the Academic Board the authority to ensure fit-for-purpose policies and procedures related to academic provision are in place. The **Board of Trustees** are responsible for ensuring they receive details from the **Vice-Principal (Academic)** of any serious incident, or one which could be of reputational risk to the College, which should be reported to either the Open University, the Office for Students and/or the Charity Commission.

16.2. **The Academic Board**, who is also authorized by the Open University through its accreditation process, acts on behalf of the **Board of Trustees** on all academic matters. They are responsible for:
- Ensuring that a fit-for-purpose Attendance Policy is approved by them and complies with all relevant legislation and regulations (e.g., the regulations of The Open University).
- Overseeing the effective implementation of this policy and ensuring it is satisfactorily managed.
- Ensuring that the principles of this policy are:
  - o Considered when managing and planning academic matters.
  - o Reviewed by exploring what can be learned from appeals/complaints when they occur.
  - o Reviewed in consultation with academic staff, students and The Open University, as a means of constantly seeking to improve the College's academic provision.
- Ensuring they receive details from the **Vice-Principal (Academic)** of reported incidents and outcomes of cases (particularly where a significant impact on someone has occurred or lessons need to be learned), or details of a serious incident or one which could be of reputational risk to the College.

16.3. **The Principal/CEO,** the **Vice-Principal (Academic)** and the **Quality Assurance Committee** are jointly responsible for the annual monitoring and review of this policy and recommending approval to the Academic Board for all changes.

16.4. **The Vice-Principal (Academic)** is responsible for providing leadership for all academic provision of the College and for leading the college's Attendance Policy and practice by:
- Fulfilling their role in investigations into poor attendance and any subsequent complaints and appeals.
- Overseeing the monitoring of attendance.
- Ensuring that decision making complies with College and Open University regulations and is applied consistently across academic provision.
- Reporting to the **Academic Board** and **Senior Leadership Team** incidents and outcomes of cases (particularly where a significant impact on someone has occurred or lessons need to be learned), or details of a serious incident or one which could be of reputational risk to the College.
- Ensuring the College and its staff comply with any appeals process undertaken by an outside agency (e.g., The OU or the OIA).

16.5. Programme **Leaders**, **Tutors** and the **Recruitment and Training Administrators** are responsible for:
- Monitoring attendance.
- Raising concerns where indicated.
- Following the procedures in this policy to investigate unauthorised absence.
- Processing any complaint or appeal in accordance with the relevant policy.

16.6. The **Student Academic Representatives** are responsible for:
- Raising academic issues on behalf of their cohort with the **Vice-Principal (Academic)**.
- Reporting back to their cohort on the resolution of issues raised by the students or one of the academic committees.

16.7. All **academic staff** are responsible for:
- Familiarising themselves with this policy on appointment/at induction/orientation.
- Taking a pro-active role in improving the College's Attendance Policy and practice.
- Promoting and implementing/complying with this policy.

If involved in an investigation into poor attendance in any capacity, they are also responsible for:
- ensuring they present their case with integrity and in a timely fashion and/or
- ensuring they comply with any investigation and the procedures in this policy.

17. POLICY COMMUNICATION

17.1. This policy and any other policies referred to in this document can be found here.

17.2. The College General Administrator will make every effort to respond to any request to provide this policy in a different format. Such requests should be sent to info@allnations.ac.uk

17.3. This policy will be included in staff and student induction.

18. RELATED DOCUMENTS
- All Nations Christian College Campus and Remote Access Student Handbooks
- All Nations Christian College Fitness to Study Policy
- All Nations Christian College Learning Support Policy
- All Nations Christian College Extenuating Circumstances Policy
- All Nations Christian College Student Disciplinary Policy
- All Nations Christian College Academic Appeals Policy
- All Nations Christian College Termination of Student's Registration Policy
- All Nations Christian College Data Protection Policy